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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Extension Service
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TO ALL STATE EXTENSION DIRECTORS:

Subject: Current Farm Labor News - #18

Migrant farm workers are available in larger numbers this year than in any year since 1941. Extension's migratory programs are much more successful in solving the problems of both migrant workers and farmers who employ them than most people had anticipated. These observations grew out of my recent western trip June 2-26 which included meetings at Chicago, Cheyenne, Portland and Omaha and field visits in six western states.

Migrant workers, farmers and extension personnel were enthusiastic about the western and central "Guides". There was demand for a similar guide for the Plains and Mountain States located between the regions covered by the western and central Guide.

Increasing numbers of workers were stopping at information stations. They were pleased with the information available. Many interviews were lasting a half hour or longer. A high proportion of those stopping were going to the areas suggested by the information station personnel.

County offices and labor camp personnel were advising many migrants regarding "next" areas of employment.

Liaison men working with Latin American migrants in the Plains and Central States are doing a fine job on a wide variety of problems. In cooperation with State supervisors much progress is being made in providing interim employment between sugar beet thinning and hoeing in the spring and sugar beet harvest in the fall.

Programs to stimulate better housing for migrants are getting results. However, continued emphasis is needed on this problem. Most areas still don't have enough satisfactory accommodations to take care of the workers needed during peak periods.

Very few of the people migrating now are the "Grapes of Wrath" type. The "professional" migrants have earned enough during the war years that many have comparatively new cars and their own living equipment, frequently a modern house trailer. Another large group seems to be composed of people who want to see the country and who incidentally engage in farm work as they travel. More men are "riding the brake rods" and "hitch hiking" than during the war years. Although the numbers are increased, many of today's migrant workers are not staying with a job until it is done. Many employers report a very high turn-over.

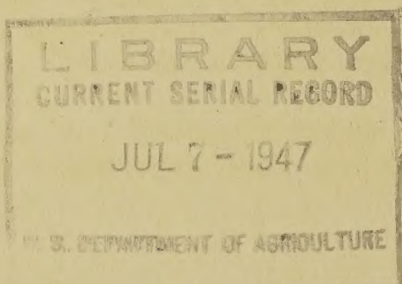
Permanent Farm Labor Legislation - No change from status reported last week. Neither the House nor the Senate Agricultural Committee have reported a bill.

Cooperative relationships between Extension Service and State Employment Security Agencies for the period July 1 to December 31, 1947, are set forth in a joint letter of the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor to the State Directors of the two agencies. Section 2b of Public Law 40 - 80th Congress, extending the farm labor supply program calls for "such action as may be necessary to assure maximum cooperation between the agricultural extension services and the State public employment agencies."

Two of the important parts of the letter are: (1) As funds are available to the Extension Service for farm placement to December 31, 1947, Federal funds for State Employment Services are being allocated without regard to farm placement activities. (2) In each State the cooperative relationships between the two agencies should be covered by a written agreement. If a written agreement is already in effect it should be reviewed and, if necessary, revised. (See Meredith C. Wilson's letter of June 30, 1947, for full text.)

Budgets - Extension of Section 2 Farm Labor Program cooperative agreements between the Land Grant Colleges and the Secretary of Agriculture have been executed by 47 States to date. All States executing such extension of agreement have been advised regarding availability of Section 2 funds for the period January 1, 1947, to January 30, 1948. Attention is now being given to Section 3 budget requests and those States expending Section 3 funds in 1947 will be advised in the near future regarding these funds for the remainder of the year.

Returning from a visit to Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas wheat harvest operations, Hugh F. Eames, Extension farm labor information, reports record smashing acreages and yields being smoothly harvested under Extension's 10-State program. Extension Harvest Guide for men and machines fulfilling every expectation. Last week in June, Texas panhandle harvest approaching hump, Oklahoma nearly cleaned up, and Kansas set to hit high starting July 4. Abundance of labor and trucks everywhere, but more combines could be used in Texas. Many combines from Oklahoma now, and more from Texas later, will be mighty helpful in Kansas. Tremendous outpouring of grain being piled high on ground. Elevators and other storage and receiving facilities inadequate. "Record acreage, record yield--more over 30 bushels than under 20--and record price", is how one Texas county agent summarized harvest. Another said: "First crop we ever had that paid for the ground in one year". Report on Iowa and Indiana corn as pessimistic as Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas wheat report is optimistic, but Illinois insists more than 90 percent of planting was in ground on June 15, and that "only third is vulnerable" and that "it will make a crop IF frost holds off till October 10-12". Many Iowa, Illinois and Indiana cornfields look just like Texas fields in which late plantings of cotton are only hand high out of ground, except cotton needs rain, while fields in corn states are soaking full and overflowing.



Yours very truly,

Barnard Joy

Barnard Joy
Acting Deputy Director of Extension
Farm Labor Program

(Copy to State supervisors)